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Mysore Archæological Series

ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE IN MYSORE

No. I

THE KESAVA TEMPLE AT SOMANATHAPUR

BY

PRAKTANA-VIMARSA-VICHAKSHANA, RAO BAHADUR

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

"The extraordinary wealth of the artistic products of Mysore," as disclosed by my Annual Reports, has attracted considerable attention both in India and outside. Considering its area, Mysore is extremely rich in the number of its artistic structures, the majority of which are built in the style named 'Chalukyan' by Fergusson, and the rest in the Dravidian style. The name Chalukyan is undoubtedly a misnomer so far as Mysore is concerned, seeing that all the buildings of this style in Mysore were erected during the rule of the Hoysalas. According to Fergusson himself this style attained its fullest development and highest degree of perfection in the dominions of the kings of the Hoysala dynasty. The name 'Hoysala' ought to be adopted as the more appropriate designation of the style. With very few exceptions, such as the temples at Tonachi, Angadi, Belgami, Kuppatur and Chikka-Hanasoge, which go back to the eleventh century, all the Hoysala buildings in Mysore came into existence in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The period of the ornate structures of the Dravidian style in Mysore ranges from the eighth to the sixteenth century.

The list, which is by no means exhaustive, of the monuments built in the two styles mentioned above, appended to this Note with some particulars relating to them, is enough to give some idea of the richness of Mysore in these artistic treasures. The dates given in a few cases are approximate. Fergusson has briefly described and illustrated about half a dozen of these temples. Mr. and Mrs. Workman have similarly dealt with a few more. Mr. Rice has briefly noticed several others besides in his volumes of the *Epigraphia Carnatica.* But the descriptions given by these scholars cannot but be incomplete, since the interior of most of the temples was a sealed book to them. Further, they have scarcely paid any attention to the sculpture of the buildings. In my Annual Reports I have not only given much additional information concerning the temples dealt with by the above-mentioned scholars, but have also described and illustrated a large number of buildings

not known before. I have, besides, furnished "an immense amount of entirely new matter descriptive of the sculpture," the illustration, especially, of individual works of art signed by the artists having aroused considerable interest among scholars in Europe. Still, as a glance at the list will show, there are many monuments which await and deserve to be described and illustrated.

A wish has been expressed in several quarters that the mass of literature bearing on temple architecture and iconography which is increasing in volume ought to be embodied in permanent form removed from the pages of the Annual Reports. It is under contemplation to prepare and publish a monograph on Hoysala architecture in Mysore. In the meantime it is proposed to issue about half a dozen short monographs with suitable illustrations on a few notable buildings of the Hoysala and Dravidian styles in the State, treating of both their architecture and sculpture. The present work on the Kesava temple at Somanathapur forms the first of the series. The illustrations have been prepared by Mr. T. Namassivayam Pillai, the Photographer and Draughtsman of my Office. My thanks are due to Mr. C. H. Yates, Superintendent, Government Press, for kind suggestions with regard to the get-up of the book and the personal care bestowed on the arrangement and printing of the illustrations.

BANGALORE,
December 1916.

R. NARASIMHACHAR.

PROVISIONAL LIST OF ARTISTIC BUILDINGS OF THE HOYSALA AND DRAVIDIAN STYLES IN MYSORE.

HOYSALA.

Temple	Place	Period	Reign	Remarks
1. Basavesvara	Tonachi	C 1047	Vinayaditya ...	...
2. Jain Bastis	Angadi	C 1050	do ...	...
3. Kedaresvara	Belgami	C 1060	do ...	Triple
4. Tripurantaka	do	1070	do ...	Double
5. Kaitabhesvara	Kuppatur	C 1070	do ...	...
6. Adinatha-basti	Chikka Hanasoge	C 1090	do ...	Triple
7. Lakshmidevi	Dodda Gaddavalli	C 1115	Vishnuvardhana...	Quadruple
8. Kesava	Belur	1117	do ...	...
9. Kappe-Chennigaraya ...	do	C 1117	do ...	Double
10. Kirtinarayana	Talkad	1117	do ...	...
11. Kesava	Marale	1130	do ...	...
12. Siddhesvara ...	do	1130	do ...	...
13. Parsvanatha-basti ...	Halebid	1133	do ...	...
14. Hoysalesvara ...	do	C 1141	Narasimha I ...	Double
15. Jain Basti	Cholasandra	1145	do ...	Triple
16. Kesava	Honnavara	1149	do ...	...
17. Isvara	Anekonda	C 1160	do ...	...
18. Kesava	Dharmapura	1162	do ...	...
19. Do	Hullekere	1163	do ...	...
20. Hoysalesvara	Tenginagatta	C 1163	do ...	...
21. Kesava	Nagamangala	C 1170	do ...	Triple
22. Brahmesvara	Kikkeri	1171	do ...	...
23. Buchesvara	Koramangala	1173	do ...	...
24. Akkana-basti	Sravana Belgola	1182	Ballala II ...	...
25. Amritesvara	Amritapura	1196	do ...	...
26. Isvara	Arasikere	C 1200	do ...	...
27. Santinatha-basti	Jinanathapura	C 1200	do ...	...
28. Mahalingesvara	Mavuttanhalli	C 1200	do ...	Triple
29. Chattesvara	Chatchattanhalli	C 1200	do ...	do
30. Trimurti	Bandalike	C 1200	do ...	do
31. Anekal	do	C 1200	do ...	do

HOYSALA—*concld.*

Temple	Place	Period	Reign	Remarks
32. Kodandarama	Hirimagalur	C 1200	Ballala II ...	...
33. Siddhesvara	Kodakani	C 1200	do ...	...
34. Santinatha-basti	Bandalike	C 1204	do ...	...
35. Kirtinarayana	Heragu	1218	do ...	...
36. Kedaresvara	Halebid	1219	do ...	...
37. Virabhadra	do	C 1220	do ...	...
38. Isvara	Nanditavare	C 1220	do ...	...
39. Harihara	Harihar	1224	Narasimha II ...	...
40. Bellur	Mule-Singesvara	1224	do ...	Triple
41. Somesvara	Harnhalli	1234	do ...	...
42. Kesava	do	C 1234	do ...	...
43. Mallikarjuna	Basaral	1235	do ...	Triple
44. Lakshminarasimha	Nuggihalli	1249	Somesvara ...	do
45. Sadasiva	do	C 1249	do ...	...
46. Lakshminarasimha	Javagal	C 1250	do ...	Triple
47. Isvara	Budanur	C 1250	do ...	...
48. Padmanabha	do	C 1250	do ...	...
49. Panchalinga	Govindanhalli	C 1250	do ...	Quintuple
50. Kesava	Nagalapura	C 1250	do ...	...
51. Kedaresvara	do	C 1250	do ...	...
52. Mallesvara	Hulikal	C 1250	do ...	...
53. Kesava	Tandaga	C 1250	do ...	...
54. Lakshminarayana	Hosaholalu	C 1250	do ...	Triple
55. Kesava	Turuvekere	C 1260	Narasimha III ...	...
56. Mule-Sankaresvara	do	C 1260	do ...	...
57. Kesava	Somanathapur	1268	do ...	Triple
58. Madhavaraya	Bellur	C 1270	do ...	do
59. Lakshminarasimha	Hole-Narsipur	C 1270	do ...	do
60. Narasimha	Vignasante	1286	do ...	do

DRAVIDIAN.

1. Nandisvara	Nandi	C 800	Govinda III ...	...
2. Lakshmanesvara, etc. ...	Avani	C 940	Bira-Nolamba ...	...
3. Chamundaraya-basti ...	Sravana Belgola	C 980	Rajamalla ...	...

DRAVIDIAN—*concld.*

TEMPLE	PLACE	PERIOD	REIGN	REMARKS
4. Muktinathesvara	Binnamangala	C 1100	Kulottunga-Chola I	...
5. Vaidyesvara	Talkad	C 1100	do ...	...
6. Panchakuta-basti	Kambadahalli	C 1120	Vishnuvardhana...	...
7. Somesvara	Kurudumale	C 1250	Ilavanji Vasudeva-raya.	...
8. Do	Kolar	C 1300	Ballala III ...	...
9. Arkesvara	Hale-Alur	C 1300	do ...	...
10. Vidyasankara	Sringeri	C 1356	Bukka I ...	...
11. Aghoresvara	Ikkeri	C 1560	Sankanna-Nayaka I	...
12. Ranganatha	Rangasthala	C 1600	Palegars	...

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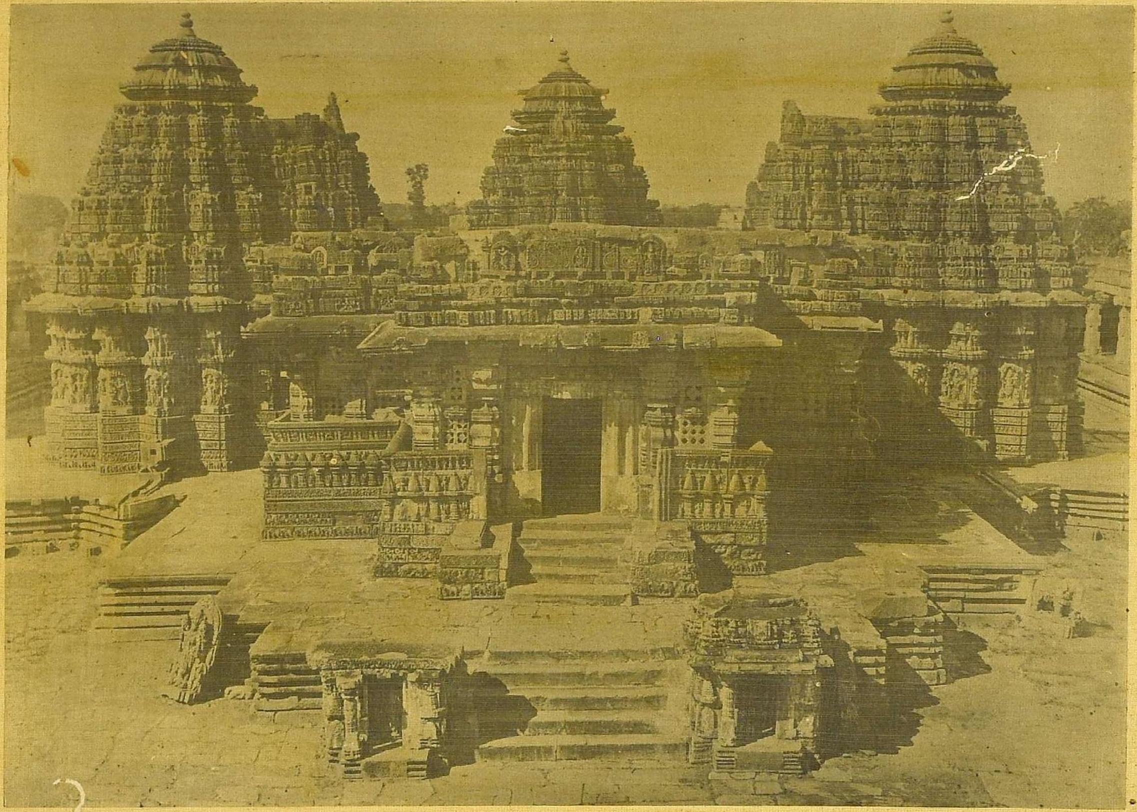


EAST VIEW OF KESAVA TEMPLE AT SOMANATHAPUR.

Mysore Archæological Survey.

ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE IN MYSORE.

No. I.

THE KESAVA TEMPLE AT SOMANATHAPUR.

SOMANATHAPUR is a small village in the Tirumakūḍalu-Narsīpur Taluk of the Mysore District in the Mysore State, situated about half a mile from the left bank of the river Kāvēri. It is about 20 miles to the south-east of the historic town of Seringapatam. The Kēśava temple in the village is a splendid example of the so-called Chālukyan, but more correctly Hoysaḷa, style of architecture. From the fine inscription[1] on a slab in the entrance porch of the temple (Plate XXI), we learn that Sōma or Sōmanātha, a high officer under the Hoysaḷa king Nārasimha III (A. D. 1254-1291), established the village as an *agrahāra* or rent-free settlement of Brahmans, naming it Sōmanāthapura after himself, and built the Kēśava temple in it in A. D. 1268. There is also another inscription at Harihar,[2] which refers to the construction of this temple and gives the same date. The object of the latter inscription is primarily to record another work of piety by the same officer, namely, the construction of a *gōpura* or tower of five storeys, adorned with golden *kalaśas* or finials, in front of the Harihārēśvara temple at Harihar, a town on the right bank of the Tungabhadrā, in the Dāvangere Taluk of the Chitaldrug District in the Mysore State, and it alludes incidentally to his erection of the Kēśava temple also.

The Kēśava temple is situated in the middle of a courtyard, about 215 feet by 177 feet, surrounded by an open veranda, which contains 64 cells (Plate II). It stands on a raised terrace, about 3 feet high, which closely

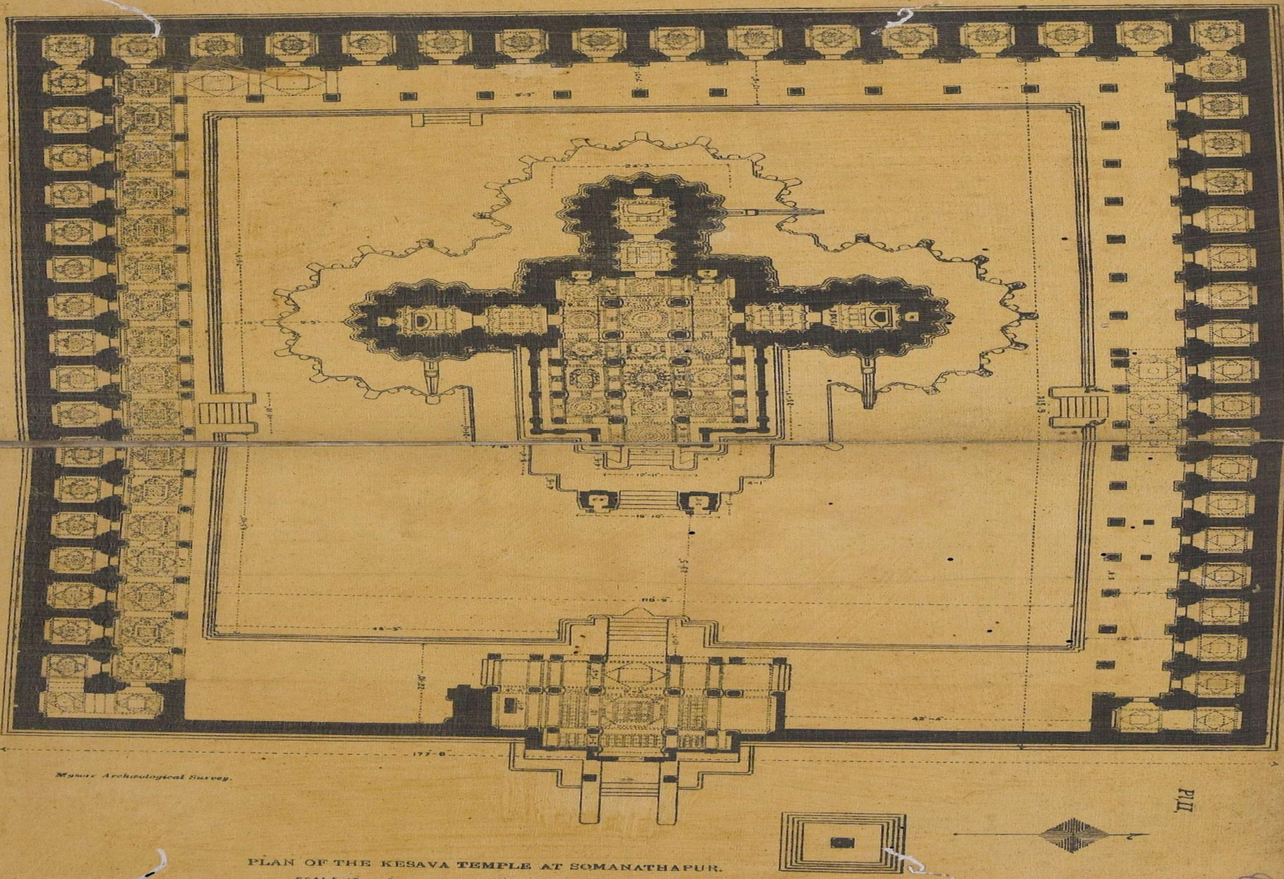
[1] *Epigraphia Carnatica*, III, Tirumakūḍalu-Narsīpur 97.

[2] *Ibid.*, XI, Dāvangere 36.

follows the contour of the structure and is supported at the angles by figures of elephants facing outwards (Plate I). There are two empty pavilions at the sides in front of the entrance, the upper parts of which are gone. Around the terrace there are, besides the elephants mentioned above, free images representing Vishṇu and other gods and goddesses leaning against it. Several of these images and elephants have been removed from their pedestals, only twelve in each class of sculptures being now left. Of the twelve images, eight represent Vishṇu, one Gaṇapati, one a Nāga, and two seated goddesses. The temple is a *trikūṭāchala* or three-celled structure, the main cell facing east and the other two, which are opposite to each other, facing north and south respectively. The three cells are surmounted by three elegantly carved towers which are identical in design and execution (Plates III and IV). These with their towers are attached to the *navaranga* or middle hall, to which again is attached, without any partition, the *mukha-mantapa* or front hall. The front of the temple with its three towers presents an imposing appearance and has often been selected as a model for silver and gold caskets.

On both sides of the entrance, runs around the front hall a *jagati* or railed parapet, on which, beginning from the bottom, are sculptured in succession the following horizontal friezes: (1) elephants, (2) horsemen, (3) scroll work, (4) scenes from the epics and the Purāṇas, (5) turretted pilasters, with small images and lions intervening between them, and (6) a rail divided into panels by double columns, containing figures, sometimes indelicate, between neatly ornamented bands (Plate V). Above these come pierced stone windows or perforated screens (Plate VI). Plate VII shows the above friezes except the first two on an enlarged scale. Most of the images in the fifth frieze represent Vishṇu. A large portion of the rail illustrates the story of Prahlāda, as related in the Purāṇas (Plate V). From the corners on both sides of the entrance where the railed parapet ends, begins, in the middle of the outer walls, a row of large images with various kinds of ornamental canopies, and continues round the remaining portion of the temple (Plates VIII and IX). On Plate X are exhibited a few of the images on an enlarged scale. Below this row of images come six horizontal friezes. The first four of these are identical with those on the railed parapet; but in place of friezes 5 and 6 on the latter, the walls have a frieze of *makaras* or mythological beasts, surmounted by a frieze of swans. Above the row of large images runs a fine

Pl. II



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PLAN OF THE KESAVA TEMPLE AT SOMANATHAPUR.

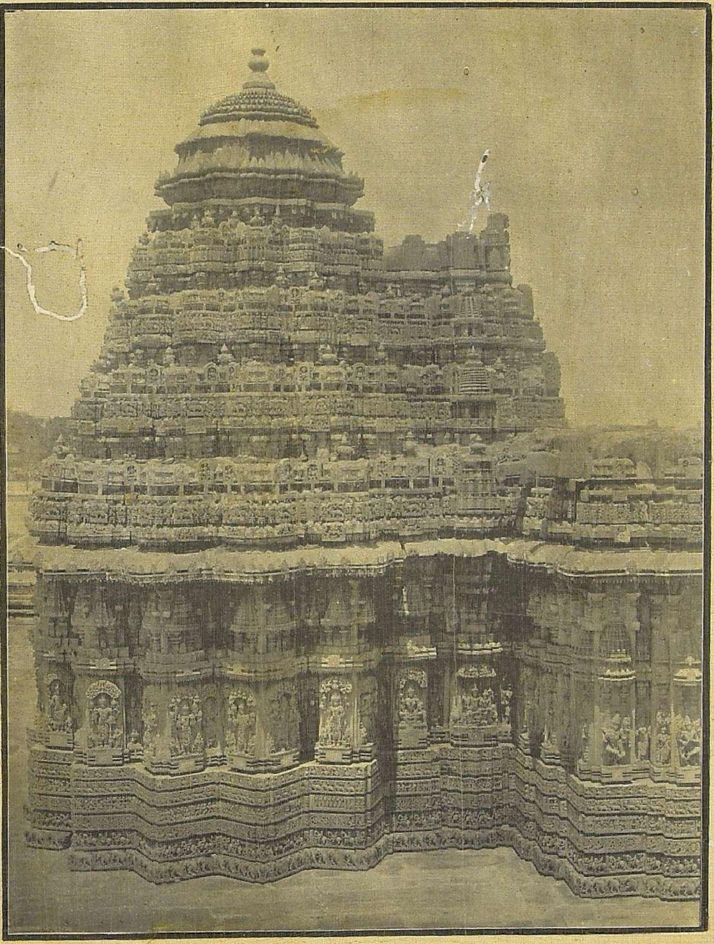
SCALE 10 5 0 10 20 30 FEET.

cornice ornamented with bead work, and above this, again, a row of miniature turrets over single or double pilasters, surmounted by ornamental eaves. The number of large images on the outer walls is 194, of which 114 are female. Their position is as follows:—around the south cell 54, 32 female and 22 male; at the corner between the south and west cells 14, 9 female and 5 male; around the west cell 58, 32 female and 26 male; at the corner between the west and north cells 14, 8 female and 6 male; and around the north cell 54, 33 female and 21 male. The gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon represented by the majority of the figures are Vishṇu and his forms such as Narasimha, Varāha, Hayagrīva, Vēṇugōpāla and Paravāsudēva; Brahmā, Śiva, Gaṇapati, Indra, Manmatha, Sūrya, Garuḍa, Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Mahishāsuramardini. A few of the figures worthy of note may be mentioned: Garuḍa bearing on his left shoulder Nārāyaṇa and Lakshmi; Indra seated with his consort Śachi on the elephant Airāvata; dancing Vishṇu and Gaṇapati; dancing Lakshmi and Sarasvati; a four-handed standing figure with the face of a monkey, two of the hands holding a discus and a conch, the other two holding between them what looks like a fruit (Plate XI, 1); and another four-handed seated figure with a discus and a conch in two hands, while the other two are placed palm over palm in the fashion of a Jaina *tīrthankara* but with this difference that the right hand also shows the *yōga-mudrā* or attitude of meditation (Plate XI, 2)[1]. Of the fourth frieze from the bottom, which may be called the Purāṇic frieze, the portion running round the south cell represents scenes from the Rāmāyaṇa, that around the west cell, scenes from the Bhāgavata-purāṇa and that round the north cell, scenes from the Mahābhārata.

As stated above, the temple is triple, that is, it has three cells, and each cell consists of a *garbha-griha* or adytum and a *sukhanāsi* or vestibule. The chief cell, that opposite the entrance, once enshrined an image of the god Kēśava, after whom the temple was named; but the image is no longer in existence. A few images of modern make are now kept in the cell. They consist of a seated figure of Lakshmīnārāyaṇa, a standing figure of Lakshmaṇa, and two seated figures of different sizes representing Lakshmi. The north cell has an image of the god Janārdana (Plate XII) and the south cell, an image of the god Vēṇugōpāla or Krishṇa playing on the flute (Plate XIII).

[1] Such a figure appears to be known as Yōga-Nārāyaṇa.

Both of them are beautifully carved, though unfortunately the flute of the latter is broken. Judging from their execution, the chief image Kēśava must have been a piece of exquisite workmanship. The lintels of both the *garbha-griha* and *sukhanāsi* doorways of all the cells are well executed. In the chief cell, the lintel of the *garbha-griha* doorway has a seated figure of Vishṇu above, and an image of Lakshmīnārāyaṇa below with the figures of the ten incarnations of Vishṇu sculptured round the base and a neatly carved tiny elephant at the left side; while that of the *sukhanāsi* doorway has a figure of Paravāsudēva above and a figure of Kēśava below. The jambs of both the doorways have *dvārapālakas* sculptured at the bottom. This cell has two fine niches at the sides which, though empty at present, once enshrined figures of Gaṇapati and Mahishāsuramardini, as evidenced by the figures of these deities prominently sculptured on their towers. The prominence given to these deities in the interior of a temple dedicated to Vishṇu is worthy of note. This peculiarity has been observed in several Vishṇu temples in the Hoysaḷa style. Though these deities are often represented on the outer walls or pillars, no such prominence appears to be given to them in Vishṇu temples of the Dravidian style. The image of Janārdana in the north cell, about 6 feet high, is elegantly carved and stands on a pedestal, about 1½ feet high, flanked by consorts (Plate XII). It has four hands, the upper two holding a discus and a conch and the lower two, a lotus and a mace. The *prabhā* or halo has the ten *avatāras* or incarnations of Vishṇu represented on it. The lintel of the *garbha-griha* doorway has a seated figure of Vishṇu above and a figure similar to figure 2 on Plate XI below, while that of the *sukhanāsi* doorway has a figure of Lakshmīnarasiṁha above and a figure of Vishṇu below. Vēṇugōpāla in the south cell is also a fine figure, about 6 feet high, standing under a *honne* tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*) on a pedestal, about 1½ feet high, flanked by consorts (Plate XIII). The image has only two hands which are engaged in playing on the flute. To the right of the image at the bottom is a small figure representing a cowherd; above this on both sides are cows listening intently to the notes of the flute; and above these, again, to the left are seated figures of sages with folded hands. The *prabhā* of this image has likewise the ten incarnations of Vishṇu sculptured on it. The lintel of the *garbha-griha* doorway has, in the upper panel, a seated female figure with four hands, and,



NORTH TOWER.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

SOUTH TOWER.

[Mysore Archæological Survey.]

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in the lower, a seated figure of Vishṇu holding a discus, a conch, a water-vessel and a fruit. The lintel of the *sukhanāsi* doorway has a figure of Lakshmīnārāyaṇa above and a figure of Vēṇugōpāla below. It is, indeed, fortunate that the sculptured semi-circular panel at the top of the inscribed slab in the entrance porch (Plate XXI) contains miniature representations of all the three images of the temple, so that, though the image of Kēśava has now disappeared, we are in a position to form some idea of its workmanship. The *navaranga* or middle hall has six ceiling panels and the *mukha-maṇṭapa* or front hall nine. Every one of them is nearly three feet deep and very artistically executed, no two of them being similar in design. Plates XIV, XV and XVI show five of these ceilings. Four pillars support the *navaranga* and fourteen, the *mukha-maṇṭapa*. Two of the latter are shown on Plate XVII. A narrow veranda runs round the front hall, whose walls have perforated screens all round (Plate VI). In spite of these screens the interior of the temple is very dark.

It is worthy of note that many of the large images on the outer walls bear inscribed on their pedestals the names of the artists who executed them. Such labels have also been found in a few other temples of this style in the Mysore State, such as those at Bēlūr, Haḷēbīḍ, Nuggihalli, etc. Among the names of the sculptors that are engraved in the Kēśava temple at Sōmanāthapur may be mentioned Mallitamma (also called Malli in two cases), Baleya, Chauḍeya, Bāmaya, Masaṇitamma, Bharmaya, Nañjaya and Yaḷamasaya. The first name occurs below 40 sculptures, the second below 6, the third below 5, the fourth below 4, the fifth below 3, the sixth below 2, and the seventh and eighth below 1 each. From the above it will be seen that the artist Mallitamma had most to do with the ornamentation of the temple. He is evidently identical with the Mallitamma whose name occurs below several images on the north wall of the Lakshmīnarasimha temple at Nuggihalli in the Channarāyapaṭna Taluk of the Hassan District, which was built in A. D. 1249[1], only 19 years before this temple. The habit that the Mysore sculptors had of signing their works is of special value to the historian of art. Elsewhere the names of artists are very rarely recorded. The figures on Plates XVIII and XIX represent five such signed images, the first two executed by Masaṇitamma and the remaining three by

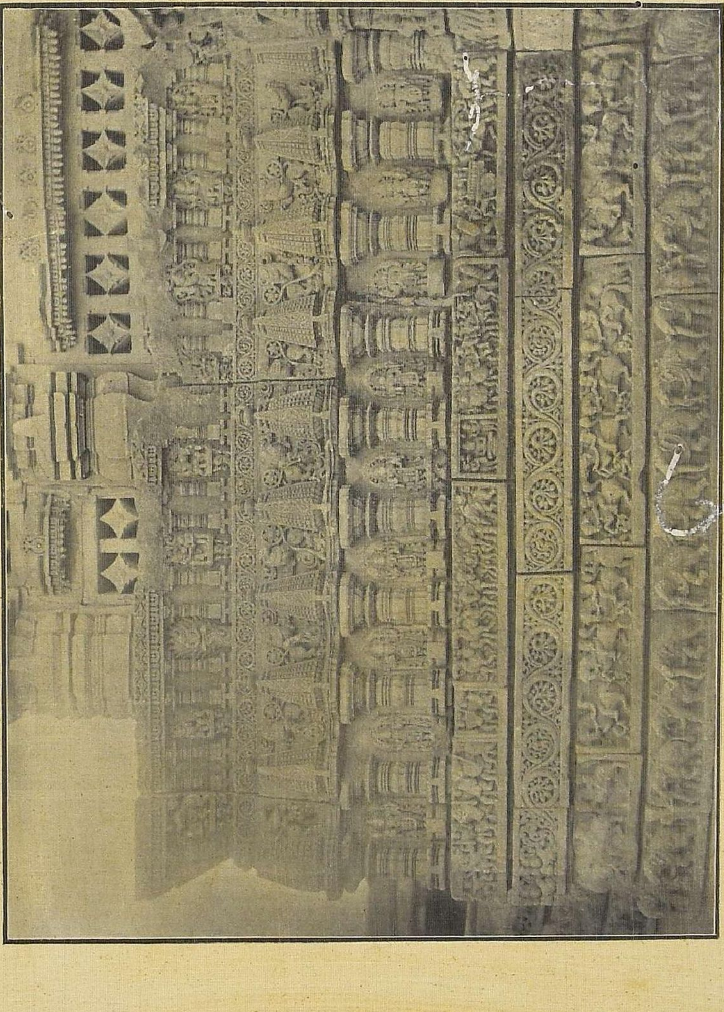
[1] *Mysore Archæological Report* for 1909, para. 84; also *Report* for 1913, para. 9.

Chauḍeya, Mallitamma and Yaḷamasaya respectively. The figures represent respectively Lakshmīnārāyaṇa, Manmatha or Cupid, Vishṇu, Mahishāsuramardini and Sarasvati. In this connection it may be mentioned that the stories popularly related of a sculptor named Jakaṇāchāri, who is believed to have built all the Hoysaḷa temples in and around Mysore, are purely imaginary. No such name has been met with in any temple there. The word is merely a corruption of the Sanskrit *Dakshiṇāchārya*, *i.e.*, a sculptor of the southern school, and does not denote any particular artist. Plate XX shows an elegantly carved figure of Sarasvati on an enlarged scale. It bears no label.

The cells in the open veranda surrounding the temple, which are sixty-four in number, are all empty at present. But from the inscription in the temple we learn that they once enshrined sixty-four deities as detailed below:—six deities comprising Brahmā and five others; twelve comprising Kēśava and eleven others; twelve comprising Haṃsa-Nārāyaṇa and eleven others; ten comprising the Fish incarnation of Vishṇu and nine others; twelve comprising Sankarshaṇa and eleven others; and twelve relating to the incarnation of Vishṇu as Kṛishṇa. It may be noted here that the Garuḍagamba (or stone pillar with a figure of Garuḍa sculptured on it) of this temple, shown in Plate IV, is not exactly opposite the entrance as usual, but a little to the north-east. This peculiarity is traditionally accounted for as follows. When the temple was completed by Jakaṇāchāri, it looked so grand and beautiful that the gods, thinking that it was too good to be on the earth, wanted to transport it to Indra's heaven. Accordingly, the structure began to rise from the earth. Jakaṇāchāri was amazed at the sight and, in his eagerness to avert the calamity, set about mutilating some of the images on the outer walls, whereupon the building descended and occupied its present position.

A few words may now be said about the inscriptions relating to the temple. The inscribed slab in the entrance porch (Plate XXI) has four inscriptions of different dates incised in Kannaḍa characters, two on the front face, one below the other, one on the west side and one on the east side. These are published as Tirumakūḍalu-Narsīpur Nos. 97, 100, 98 and 99 respectively in Volume III of the *Epigraphia Carnatica*, the dates of the epigraphs being respectively A. D. 1269, 1281, 1300 and 1325. Of these, No. 97

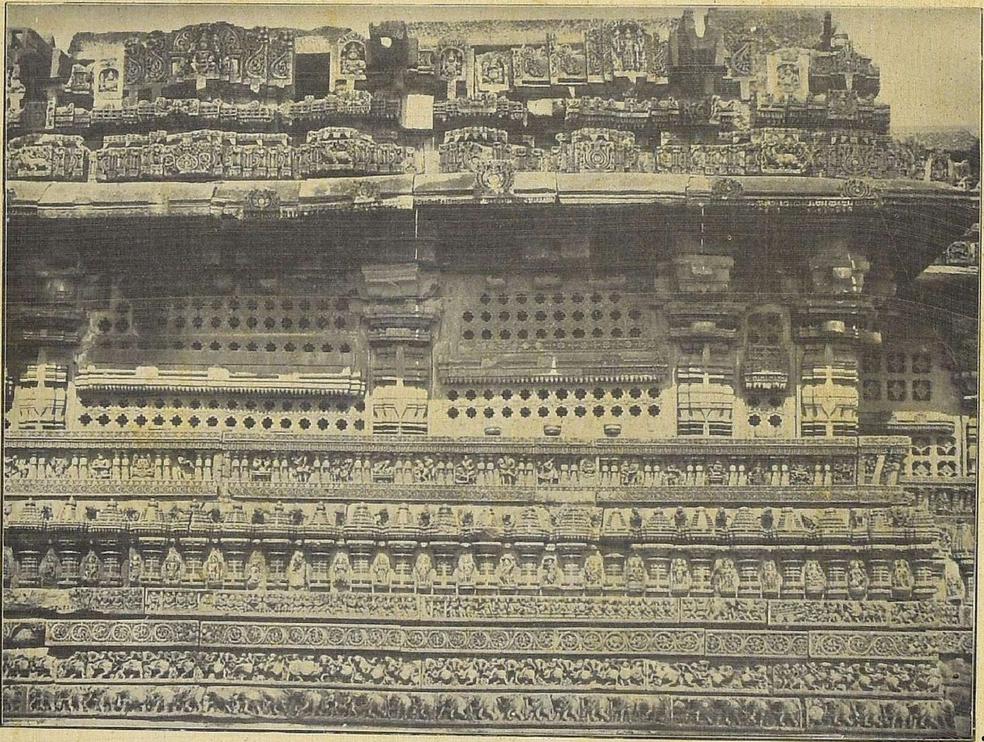
PLATE V.



RAILED PARAPET ON THE NORTH WALL

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

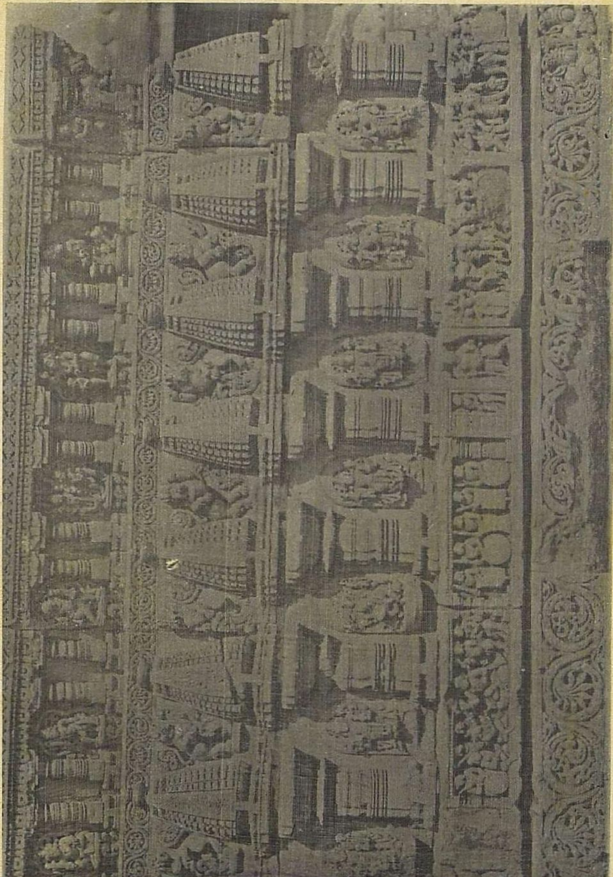
PLATE VI.



RAILED PARAPET ON THE SOUTH WALL WITH PERFORATED SCREENS ABOVE.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

PLATE VII.



RAILED PARAPET ON THE SOUTH WALL, ENLARGED, OMITTING FIRST TWO FRIEZES.

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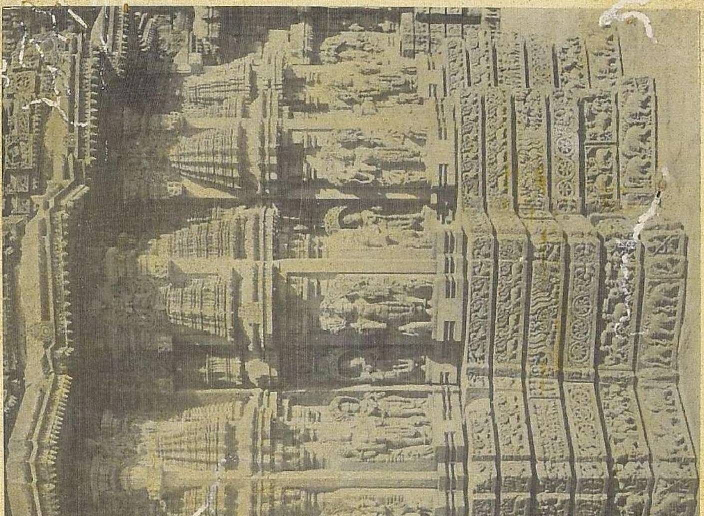
is the most important, as it was inscribed soon after the consecration of the temple and gives details about the gods that were set up and about the provision made for the services in the temple and for the livelihood of the temple servants. It is a long inscription consisting of 91 lines, the first seventeen being in the Sanskrit language and the rest in Kannaḍa. After two invocatory verses in praise of the Boar incarnation of Vishṇu, the epigraph proceeds to give the usual account of the rise of the Hoysaḷas and their genealogy down to Nārasimha III. We are then told that, when king Nārasimha was one day seated in the council chamber in his capital Dōrasamudra (Haḷēbīḍ), the minister Sōma rose from his seat along with his nephews Malli-dēva and Chikka-Kētaya and made obeisance to the king, whereupon the king understood his desire and gave him all he wished, besides making an annual grant of 3,000 (gold pieces) for the worship of the images of Vishṇu set up in the *agrahāra* which he had founded. The Sanskrit portion closes with the statement that Sōma made a worthy distribution of the grant, as described further on in the Kannaḍa language. The Kannaḍa portion of the record tells us that, when the refuge of all the world, favourite of earth and fortune, *mahārājādhirāja*, *rāja-paramēśvara*, lord of the excellent city of Dvārāvati, sun in the sky of the Yādava family, crest-jewel of the all-knowing, king of the hill chiefs, champion over the Malapas, terrible to warriors, fierce in war, sole warrior, firm in the field of battle, Śanivārasiddhi, Giridurgamalla, a Rāma in firmness of character, a lion to the elephants his enemies, a Kandarpa of unprecedented beauty, establisher of the Chōḷa king, raiser up of the Pāṇḍya kingdom, uprooter of the Magara kingdom, setter up of pillars of victory at Sētu and the Vindhya mountains, profusely munificent in giving wealth and land, Śrī-Vishṇuvardhana-pratāpa-chakravarti Hoysaḷa-bhujabaḷa-śrī-vīra-Nārasimha-Dēvarasa was in the residence of Dōrasamudra, ruling the kingdom in peace and wisdom, on Wednesday, the 12th lunar day of the bright fortnight of Āshāḍha in the year Śukla corresponding to the Śaka year 1192, he made a grant of the revenues of certain places to provide for the services, festivals, repairs and the livelihood of servants of the Kēśava temple caused to be erected by Sōma-daṇṇāyaka in the great *agrahāra* established by him in his own name. The inscription then records the grant of the revenues of certain other places by Sōma, the names of his parents being given as Hemmeya-daṇḍanātha and

Rēvalā. Among the titles applied to Sōma may be mentioned—great minister, *gāyi-Gōpāḷa*, *gaṇḍa-peṇḍāra*, a jūba (? sacrificial post) to *maṇḍalikas*, champion over proud *maṇḍaḷikas*, a Dēvēndra among *daṇḍanāthas*, a Svayambhū with his good sword (*asi-vara*), a Triṇētra in wielding the sword, a Rēvanta in riding the most vicious horses, a Kṛitānta to the hostile army. We are then told that Malli-dēva and Chikka-Kētaya, the nephews of Sōma, made an allotment of the revenues for the gods and the temple servants. The rest of the record gives details of the allotment. The inscription calls the village Vidyānidhi-prasanna-Sōmanāthapura. The three images of the temple are named respectively Prasanna-Kēśava, Gaṇḍapeṇḍāra-Gōpāla and Varada-Janārdana, the second image being so named after one of the titles of Sōma. One of the gods outside the temple for whom also an allotment is made is "Lakshmīnarasimha on the bank of the Kāvēri." The temple dedicated to this god, which is situated a few yards from the bank of the Kāvēri to the south-west of the Kēśava temple, is now in ruins (Plate XXII, *a*). Though built in the Hoysaḷa style, it is a plain structure without any sculptures on the outer walls. This temple is locally known as the 'Moṇṇusāle temple,' because tradition has it that it was built by an artist with a maimed hand (*moṇḍu*).

The remaining three inscriptions are all in Kannaḍa. No. 100, engraved below the above-mentioned inscription, records a grant in A. D. 1281 by the same king to the *āchāryas*, Vaishṇavas and *nambis* of the Kēśava temple. The signature of the king—*Malaparoḷ-gaṇḍa*—is given at the end. No. 98, inscribed on the west side of the slab, registers a grant in A. D. 1300 to the *mahājanas* of the *agrahāra* by king Ballāḷa III, son of Nārasimha III. No. 99, which is on the east side of the same slab, is dated in A. D. 1325 and records an agreement between the Vaishṇavas and certain other *mahājanas* of the village with regard to the payment of certain sums of money in favour of the temple. Two more epigraphs have been recently discovered. One of them, dated A. D. 1497, is on a beam of the veranda on the south, while the other, dated A. D. 1550, is on a slab built into the ceiling of the veranda on the west. The former tells us that, during the reign of the Sāḷuva king Immaḍi Narasinga, on a petition being made to him about the restoration of the *agrahāra* of Sōmanāthapura, which had been originally founded by Sōma-daṇḍanātha but had subsequently gone to decay, he called

PLATE VIII.



BOTTOM OF SOUTH TOWER.

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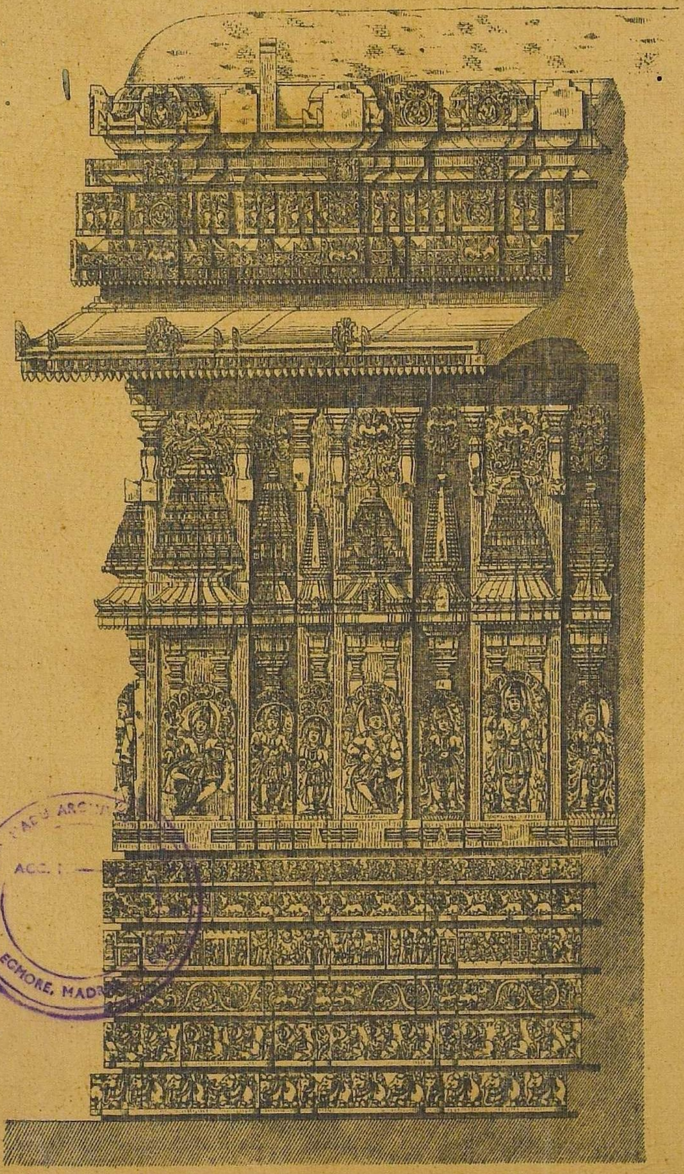

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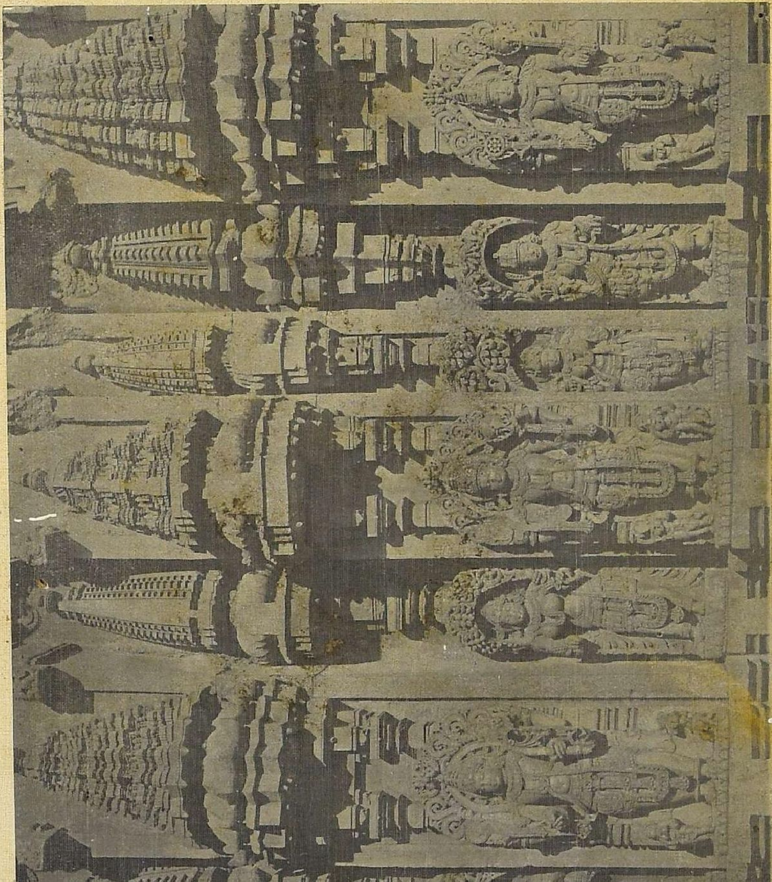
PLATE X.



LARGE IMAGES ON THE SOUTH WALL.

Mysore Archaeological Survey.]

the notice of Nṛisimha, son of Īśvara to this matter, whereupon the latter directed Nanja-Rāy-Oḍeyar of Ummattūr to restore the *agrahāra*; and that accordingly this chief granted certain villages for the *lingas* and the god Kēśava of Sōmanāthapura and bestowed a number of *vṛittis* on various Brahmans. The other inscription records that, during the rule of the Vijayanagar king Sadāśiva-Rāya, the *mahā-manḍalēśvara* Avubhaḷarājaya-mahā-arasu, son of Rāmarāja-Timmarāja-Eṟedimmarāja of the lineage of Bukkarāja of Āravaṭi, having been informed on enquiry that the Chaturvēdi-mangala Vidyānidhi-prasanna-Sōmanāthapura was the holy hermitage of Vasishṭha, remitted the taxes which were being paid to the palace by the Brahmans of the *agrahāra*. The signature of Avubhaḷarājaya—*Śrīranga-śayi*—comes at the end.

The inscription at Harihar, which has already been referred to, also gives some details about the genealogy of Sōma, the *agrahāra* of Sōmanāthapura founded by him and the gods set up therein. It is engraved in Kannaḍa characters and consists of 88 lines, the first 42 of which are in the Sanskrit language. The Kannaḍa portion of the record is more or less a paraphrase of the Sanskrit portion. After a few invocatory verses in praise of Śambhu, the Boar incarnation of Vishṇu, Gaṇapati, Lakshmi, and Vishṇu, the inscription gives the descent of Sōma thus:—In the race born from the feet of Brahmā arose Rudra, who was a minister of king Hermāḍi, lord of Kalyāṇa; his son was Mailaya-nāyaka; his son, Heggaḍa-nāyaka, who was also a subordinate of the lord of Kalyāṇa; to him and his wife Rēvalā was born Sōma. The Kannaḍa portion gives a few more details:—Rudra, here named Ruddiya-nāyaka, had the title *ganḍa-penḍāra*. His wife was Nannave. Mailaya-nāyaka served under the Chālukya king Jagadēkamalla and had the title *gāyi-Gōvaḷa*. His wife was Rebbalā. Then the inscription refers to the *agrahāra* established by Sōma on the bank of the Kāvēri and the gods set up by him. The *agrahāra* was so full of learned men that even the parrots there were capable of holding discussions in *mīmāmsā*, *tarka* and *vyākaraṇa*. In addition to the gods already mentioned as having been set up in the Kēśava temple, the record names the following:—Vishvaksēna, Indra and Sarasvati. The Kannaḍa portion adds Gaṇapati, Bhairava, Sūrya and Durgā, and gives a total number of seventy-four gods set up in the Kēśava temple. We are also told that Sōma set up a number of *lingas* in

the village. The Kannaḍa portion names five of them set up in the north-east of the village. They are Bijjalēśvara, Pergaḍēśvara, Rēvalēśvara, Bayiralēśvara and Sōmanātha, the second and third being named after Sōma's father and mother and the fifth after himself. These *lingas* are enshrined in a temple known as the Panchalinga, which is mostly in ruins. This is a large structure built of granite, containing five cells which stand in a line (Plate XXII, *b*), and there is also a fine inscription[1] here, similar to the one at the entrance porch of the Kēśava temple and bearing the same date. The record then tells us that Sōma's elder brother was Mēḷaya, his nephew Malli-dēva and his family guru Gangādharārya. After a few verses in praise of the god Harihara, the Sanskrit portion closes with the statement that in the year Vibhava corresponding to the Śaka year 1191 (A. D. 1268) Sōmanātha had a tower with golden *kalaśas* made at the gate of the temple of Harihara. The Kannaḍa portion adds that the tower was of five storeys and applies the following additional titles to Sōma:—a jewel of ministers, a Chāṇakya in policy, a Yōgandhara in business, champion over traitors to their lord. It concludes thus:—When (with titles as given in a previous paragraph) Nārasimha-Dēvarasa was ruling the kingdom in peace and wisdom, his servant (with titles as given above), Sōma-daṇḍanātha, in the above-mentioned year, having founded the *agrahāra* Vidyānidhi-prasanna-Sōmanāthapura, built Śaiva and Vaishṇava temples there and set up the gods in them, made a tower at the eastern gateway of the Harihara temple in Harihara with five storeys and five golden *kalaśas*.

It may also be mentioned here that the above were not the only acts of piety of Sōma-daṇḍanātha. From some inscriptions[2] at Turuvēkere, Tumkur District, we learn that he also founded Turuvēkere as an *agrahāra* under the name of Sarvajña-śrī-vijaya-Nārasimhapura after his master Nārasimha III about the middle of the 13th century. The same inscriptions also lead us to suppose that the Chennakēśava and Mūle-Śankarēśvara temples at Turuvēkere, which are also in the Hoysaḷa style[3], were caused to be erected by him.

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[1] *Epigraphia Carnatica*, III, Tirumakūḍalu-Narsīpur 101.

[2] *Ibid.*, XII, Tiptur 2, 4 and 8.

[3] *Mysore Archæological Report* for 1916, paras. 8 and 90.

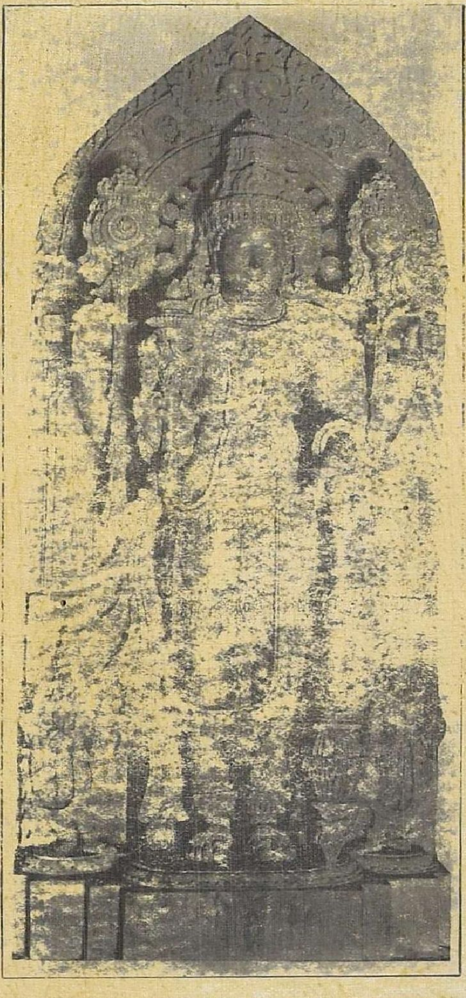
PLATE XI.

1. STANDING FIGURE OF VISHNU.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

2. SEATED FIGURE OF VISHNU.

PLATE. XII.



JANARDANA IN THE NORTH CELL.

Mysore Archaeological Survey.]

VENUGOPALA IN THE SOUTH CELL.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

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The Sanskrit portions of Tirumakūḍalu-Narsīpur No. 97 and the Harihar inscription are given in the Appendix at the end.

Fergusson, the great authority on architecture, whose work contains a woodcut[1] of one of the towers of the Kēśava temple at Sōmanāthapur, says:—

"The following woodcut will give an idea—an imperfect one, it must be confessed—of the elegance of outline and marvellous elaboration of detail that characterises these shrines. Its height seems to be only about 30 feet, which, if it stood in the open, would be almost too small for architectural effect; but in the centre of an enclosed court, and where there are no larger objects to contrast with it, it is sufficient, when judiciously treated, to produce a considerable impression of grandeur, and apparently does so in this instance."

In Workman's *Through Town and Jungle*, which contains a few more details about the same temple, the following remarks occur:—

"The most complete and symmetrical, although the smallest of the three temples in Mysore, is at the village of Sōmanāthapur.

If any parts can be called finer than others, the palm must be given to the three stellate towers. Their height from the plinth is about 32 feet, and not a square inch of their surface is without decoration. . . . . . These towers absolutely captivate the mind by their profusion of detail and perfection of outline; and there is no suggestion of superfluity in the endless concourse of figures and designs.

To construct a building of less than 35 feet in height, load it from bottom to top with carving, and produce the effect not only of beauty and perfect symmetry but also of impressiveness, shows supreme talent on the part of the architects."

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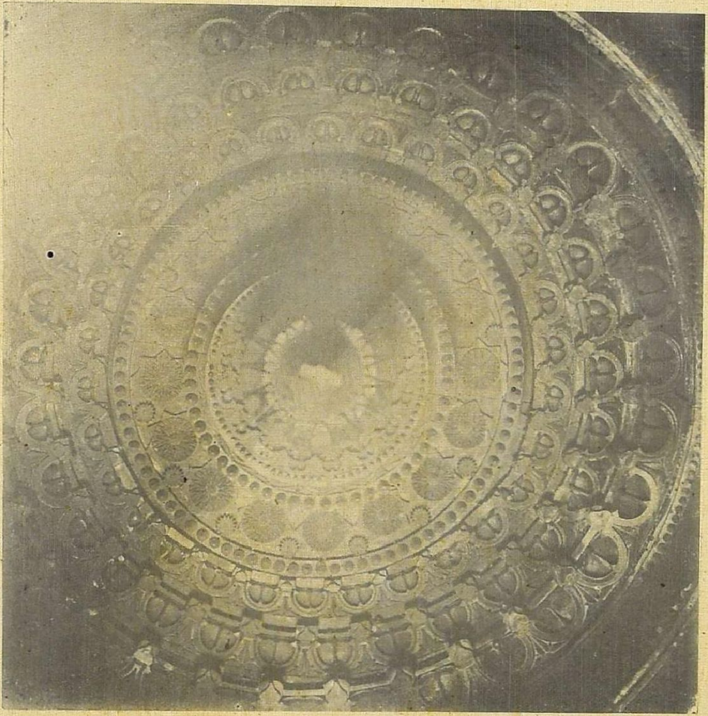
[1] *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, I, 438.



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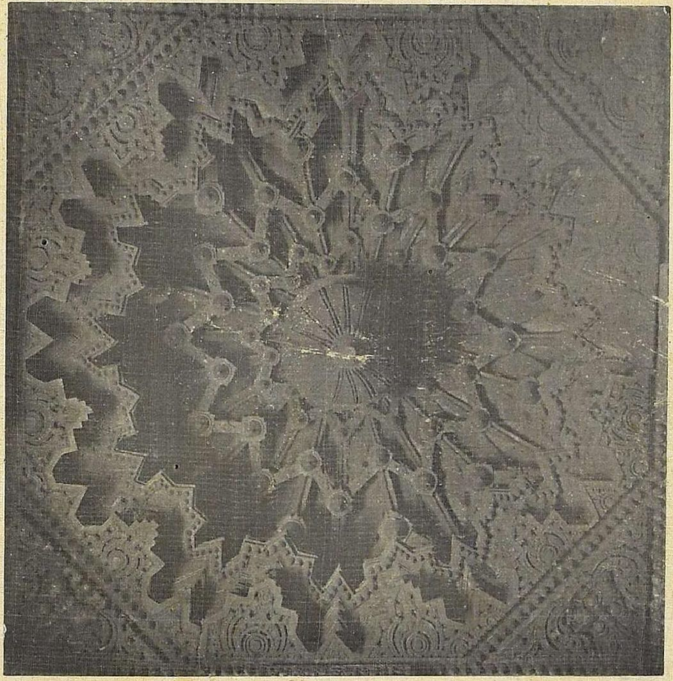

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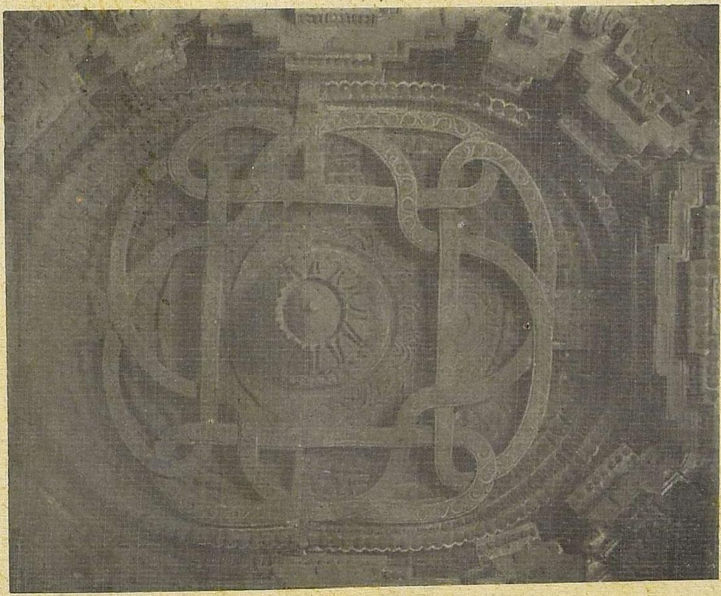

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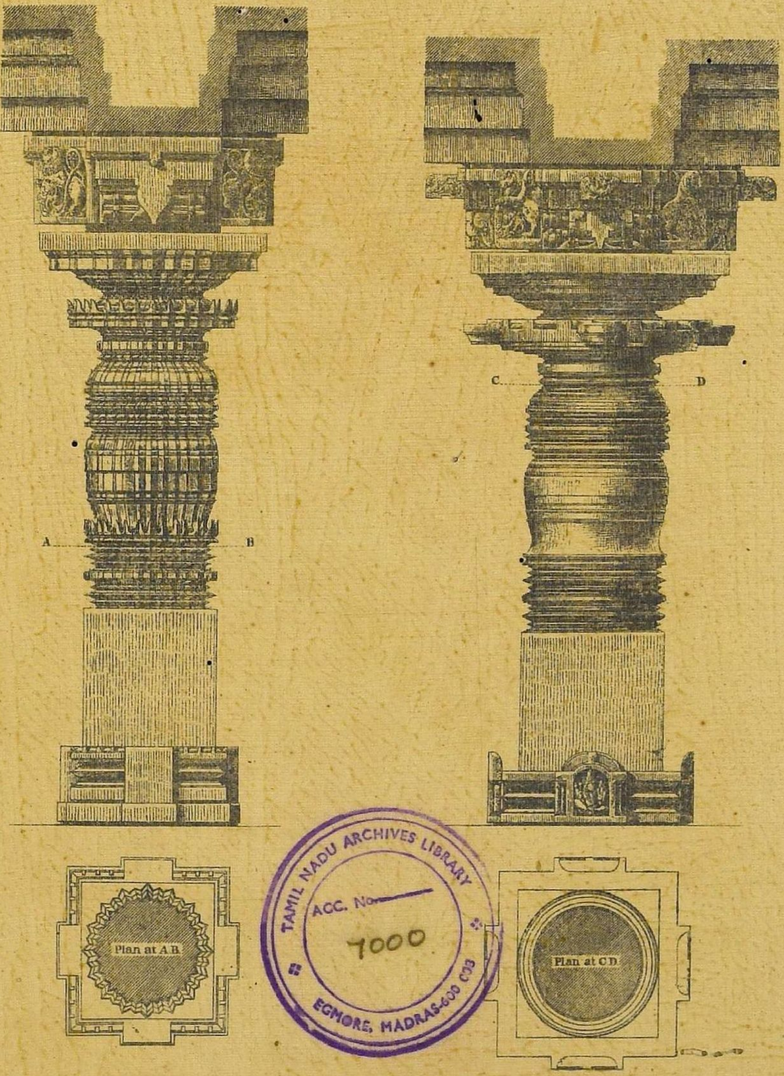
Mysore Archæological Survey.]

PILLARS IN THE MUKHA-MANTAPA OR FRONT HALL.



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APPENDIX

A.

The Sanskrit portion (lines 1—17) of Tirumakudalu-Narasipur No. 97 at the Kesava temple, Somanathapur.

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1 श्रीमत्सिंधुतरंगताडनदशादैन्याद्रुदस्यन्महीं पायाद्वः परमः पुमान् परिगतः प्रौढिं व-
राहात्मना । दंष्ट्रासीमनि यस्य भूरुद्व-

2 हत् शालूरशल्कश्रियं यस्यासीदविशालपल्वलनिभः कल्लोलिनीवल्लभः ॥ नित्योत्भासि-
त्रिणाळकोमळनिजप्रोत्तुंगदंष्ट्रो-

3 त्थितं क्षोणीचक्रमभिप्रसारितपयःपूराभिरामं महत् । सानंदं विकसत्सरोरुहधिया
सद्यस्सरोजालयामारूढामवलो-

4 क्य जातहसितः पोत्री हरिः पातु वः ॥ आविर्भावयति स्म नाभिनलिनान्नारायणो
राजसं धातारं स चतुर्मुखश्चतुरया विश्वं धियाकल्पयत् । त-

5 स्मादत्रिरभूदकृत्तिमतपास्तल्लोचनाद्दैदवं ज्योतिर्जातु जनिं जगाम ववृते वंशस्ततो भू-
भुजां ॥ तस्मिन्विस्मयनीयचारुचरिते जातो यदुस्तन्मुखाः

6 प्रख्याताश्च परश्शतं भुजभृतः केचित् पुरा जज्ञिरे । तद्वंशे शळ इत्युदग्रमहिमा
सर्वांम्महीं बाहुना भुंजानो नृपतिर्निजां शशपुरीमध्यास्त शाखेक्षणः ॥ वासंतीं
कुलदेवतान्नरपतिर्न्नंतुं कदाचित् गतस्त-

7 त्पार्श्वे निवसंतमाश्रयदसौ सिद्धं च तत्रांतरे । शार्दूलो बलवान्जिघृक्षुरगमत्तं ब्या-
जघानापभीस्सिद्धेनापि च होय्शळेति कथितः कर्णाटवाचा नृपः ॥ तत्कालात्प्र-
भृति प्रतीतिमभजन्यद्वंशजा भूभुजस्त-

8 त्राक्षेव यदीयदानकथनैः कर्णोपि नाकर्ण्यते । तस्यासीदेरयंगभूपरिवृढः पुत्रस्ततोजायत
श्रीमान्विष्णुरशेषधर्मविहितौ वेधाः परन्नूतनः ॥ तत्पुत्रो नरसिंहभूमिदयितस्त-

9 स्मान्महीवल्लभो वल्लाळोजनि दानमातनुत यः प्रत्यर्थिनामर्थिनां । तस्याभूत्तनयो नृसिंह-
नृपतिश्चोळप्रतिष्ठापकः पाण्ड्यानामवति स्म मण्डलमतिस्फीतेन शौर्योष्मणा ॥
तेन स्थावरजंगमस्य जगतो नेता निय-

10 न्ता द्विषां सोमस्सोम [illegible]तादपादि सकला यस्मिन् प्रसेदुः कलाः । आसामास च
विजलेरि[illegible] [illegible]हिला गंगेव दुग्धांबुधेस्तुंगश्रीरुदियाय कल्पक इव श्रीनारसिंह-
स्तयोः ॥ यस्य

11 क्रूरक्रिपाणकोणकषणत्रुट्यद्द्विषत्कन्धराकीलश्च्योतदमेन्दलोहितपयः पूरैर्व्विशुद्धं यशः ।
योस्मिन्दातरि कातरस्सुरतरुः कर्णस्स किं वर्ण्यते चिन्तारत्नमचिन्त्यमेव सुरभिस्सौल-

12 भ्यमभ्यस्यतु ॥ पुरे वसन्दोरसमुद्रनाम्नि सोयं नृसिंहः क्षितिपालसिंहः । कदाचिदा-
स्थानमथाध्यतिष्ठत्तत्रोत्थितो दानमयः प्रसंगः ॥ तदात्वे सत्वानामपि हृदय-

13 वेदी मतिमताम्महीयान्मूर्द्धन्यस्सकलनृपसामन्तसदसः।नृसिंहक्ष्मापालप्रणयरसिकस्सोम-
सचिवस्स्वपीठाश्चेतोभि[illegible]स्सहितमहितानामुदच-

14 लत् ॥ मल्लिदेवपृतनापति[illegible]स्स्वयं यत्स्वसुः प्रथम एव नन्दनः । वारितारिनृपशौर्यपा-
वकः पाणिधूततरवारि[illegible]धारया ॥ चिक्ककेतयचमूधुरन्धरो यस्य

15 बाहुधुरमन्यदुर्धरां । आबिभर्त्ति नरसिंहभूपतेः पुत्रभाण्डमपि मण्डनं भुवः ॥ प्रणम्य-
तिष्ठन्तमवेक्ष्य सोमं सभागिनेयं यदुवंशचन्द्रः । विज्ञाय त-

16 [illegible]कार्य्यमशेषमाशु प्रादात् स्वयं तस्य समीहितानि ॥ पुनश्च तेनैव कृतेग्रहारे प्रति-
ष्ठितानाम्मुरभित्तनूनां । पूजार्थमस्मै त्रिसहस्रसंख्यं करस्वमात्मीयम-

[illegible] [illegible]स्त नित्यं ॥ सोपि सोमयदण्डेशो यथार्हं तमकल्पयत् । प्रकटीक्रियते सोयमर्थः
कर्ण्णाटभाषया ॥

B.

The Sanskrit portion (lines 1—42) of the inscription at Harihar.

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1 श्रीहरिहरायनमः ॥ नमस्तुंगशिरश्चुंबिचंद्रचामरचारवे । त्रैलोक्यनगरारंभमूल-

2 स्तंभाय शंभवे ॥ श्रीकांतः स जयति केलिकोलमूर्त्तिर्ल्लीलोकार्त्तिप्रथितपयोधिकुंभजन्मा ।
यद्दंष्ट्राविकासित-

3 केतकच्छदाग्रे भृंगीव स्फुरति शुभा वसुंधरेयं ॥ समवतु गजवदनो वः शश्वद्विश्व-
प्रशस्तविस्तारः । अनुकुरु-

4 ते यः पितरं मदजलमिलितालिनीलितग्रीवः ॥ सा कल्याणावतारं कलयतु कम-
लावासकांता सितां-

SIGNED IMAGES.

1. LAKSHMINARAYANA, EXECUTED BY MASANITAMMA.

2. MANMATHA, EXECUTED BY MASANITAMMA.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

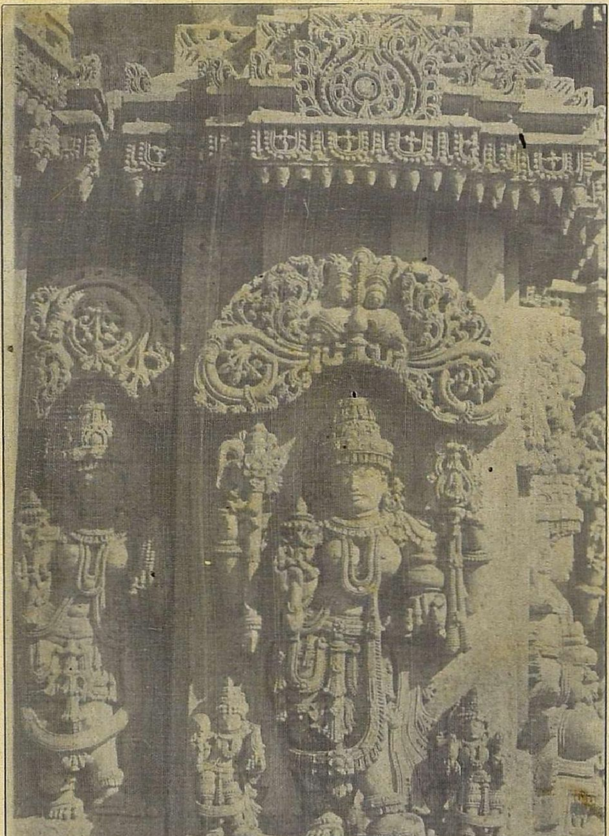
SIGNED IMAGES.

1. VISHNU, EXECUTED BY CHAUDEYA.

2. MAHISHASURAMARDINI, EXECUTED BY MALLITAMMA.

3. SARASVATI, EXECUTED BY YALAMASAYA.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]



SARASVATI.

Mysore Archæological Survey.]

5 भश्चोतज्योतिर्वितानाः सकलकलसुधाकायदायादवक्त्रा । या पादांभोजभाजां निरवधि कुरुते श्रीविला-

6 सं विशालं किंच प्रोदंचदिंदुद्युतिलहरिपरीहासिनो वाग्विलासान् ॥ देवः पायाद-पायाद्वः श्रीशो यस्य त-

7 नुर्नेनु । त्रिलोकीभामिनीभाले कस्तूरीतिलकायते ॥ मौलिप्रोल्लासिफणिस्थितवलयकला-सर्पतल्पाब्धिशायिश्रीकांताना-

8 थचक्षुस्तुहिनकिरणतः श्रीररुकपौनरुक्त्यं । कुर्व्वन् संरंभदूरोच्चलितसुरनदीशीकराकार-सारास्ताराः क्षीरांबुराशिप्रतिम-

9 वनरुचः ताडवं वः पुनातु ॥ श्रीकांताह्वयमस्ति वस्तु भवनध्वंसानभिज्ञं महः सर्वज्ञं भुवनोद्भवस्थितिलयव्यापार-

10 पारंगतं । तन्नाभीसरसीरुहभ्रमरतामध्यासि योतयन्धाता नूतनविश्वसंभवकलाप्राग-ल्भ्यमभ्यस्यति ॥ वंशस्तत्पा-

11 दजन्मा जगति विजयते यामिनीकामुकश्रीनिश्रीभावैकभूमिः स्वचरितविभवाक्रांतदि-क्चक्रवालः । तस्मिन्वि-

12 स्फारतेजोव्रजभुवि जनने विक्रमप्रक्रमासिव्यरपारातारिनारीजनंनयनझरीवार्समुद्रः स रुद्रः ॥ योसौ वैरिनरेंद्र-

13 चंद्रवदनालंकारसत्कानन प्रोद्दीप्यद्दवयादवान्वयमहावाराशितारापतेः । कल्याणाधिपतेर-मात्यतिलको हेमाद्रिभू-

14 मीभुजः शत्रुक्षत्रियतक्षदक्षिणभुजस्तंभः समुज्जृंभितः ॥ कंठे न धत्ते स्म विषं द्विजि-ह्वैर्न संगमङ्गीकुरु । [illegible] नापि । जडाश्र-

15 यो नोग्रत [illegible] प्रसिद्धस्तथाप्यसौ नोज्झितरुद्रमुद्रः ॥ तस्मादस्मादजनि रजनीनायकस्फीत-कायज्योतिर्धा-

16 टीप्रकटितयशाः [illegible] मैलयाख्यः । वैरिक्षोणीरमणतरुणीसज्जदक्कज्जलानां प्रत्याद[illegible]-नरसिकोप्य-

17 जैकस्तज्जलानां ॥ आविस्सावित्रतेजोविजयिनिजभुजादंडचंडप्रतापस्तस्मादासीत् स्वदा-सीकृतरिपुनिकरो हेग्गडः ख-

18 ड्गवीरः । मैलः कल्याणनाथक्षितिपतिविभवांभोधिचंद्रावतारो भूजातः पारिजातस्तिरयति च सुधामाधु-

19 र्यीं साधुवादैः ॥ तस्यासीदसितोत्पलद्युतिकलासीरभ्यगर्भेश्वरस्थायल्लोचनविभ्रमा गुणगण-श्रीज्यायसी प्रेयसी । ना-

20 ज्ञा यापि च रेवलेति विदिता धाम्ना च हेमप्रभा राज्ञापि स्मयते स्मितेन च सुधाभानुं मुदा निंद्रति ॥ तस्यामाविर-

21 भूद्भूतविक्रतावक्षामलक्ष्मीसमावासो हेग्गडनायकाङ्गुणमिलन्मुक्तावलीनायकात् । कीर्ति-ज्योतिरमंदचंदनप-

22 यःप्राय वितन्वयं [illegible] नामत एव नारितरुणीवक्त्राब्जसंकोचकः ॥ ख्यातः श्रीहोय्सला-लीकुलजलधिसुधा-

23 दीधितिर्धीधुरीणः श्रीखेलचोलपांड्यप्रभृतिनरपतिस्थापनाचार्य ईशः । वीरः श्रीसोमभूमी-परिवृढतनयो ना-

24 रसिंहक्षितीशो यत्स्वामी सोमनामा जगति विजयते शाहिनीवल्लभोयं ॥ नूनं सोमचमूना-थः श्री-

25 वारिकरिणां गणः । अन्यथा कथमुज्जृम्भेनांबुसरितामतः ॥ निर्मितो धर्मशालेन कविभि-र्येन वर्ण्यते । अग्रहारः सु-

26 खाधारः कावेरीसरितस्तटे ॥ कापि कापि नयावलीपरिमिलन्मीमांसया मांसलाः कापि कापि च तर्ककर्कशवचोवीची-

27 निचोलीकृताः । कापि कापि च शब्दयज्ञकवितासंवावदूकाः शुकाः श्रीविद्यानिधिसोमना-थनगरी सा भाति भूषा भुवः ॥

28 कावेरीसरितस्तटे पुरहरः श्रीनारसिंहेश्वरः श्रीलक्ष्मीनृहरिस्तथा मुरहरः श्रीयोगनारायणः।

29 ऐशान्यां दिशि पंच पंचवदनाः श्रीविज्जलेशादयो गोपालेन जनार्दनेन च सह श्रीकेशवो मध्यतः ॥ मत्स्याद्या दश मूर्तयो

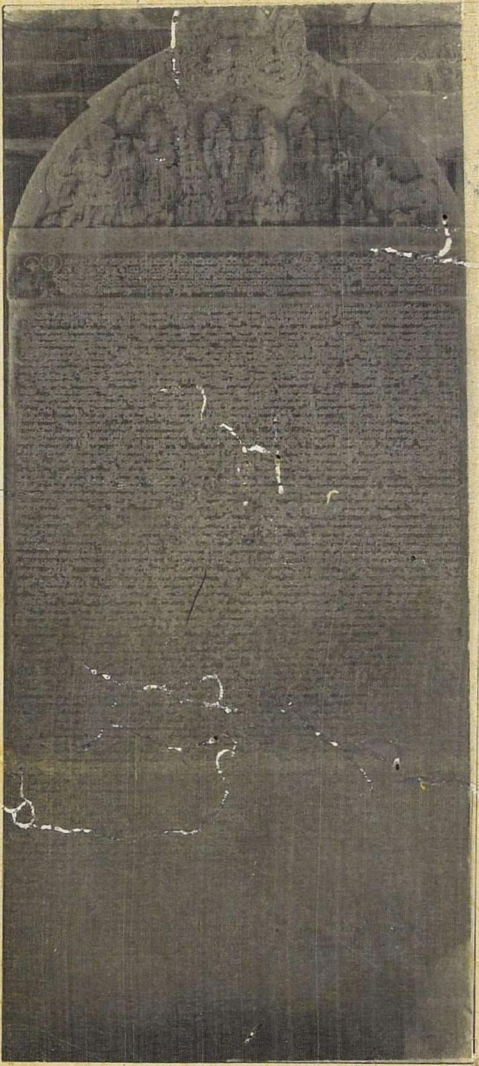
30 मुरहरा नारायणा [illegible] प्राकारेषु च केशवादय [illegible] सक[illegible]णाद्यास्तथा । विष्वक्सेनमु-खास्तथा च वह-

31 वः पद्मासनेंद्रादिना देवाः सोमपुरे सहापि च गिरा येन प्रतिष्ठापिताः ॥ यस्याग्रजो मेलय-नामधेयः सेनाप-

32 तिर्वर्धितभागधेयः । यद्भागिनेयो रिपुगात्रमल्लः श्रीमल्लिदेवोरिवनैकदावः ॥ यद्दानतोषिता-कारा निर्दोषैर्गु-

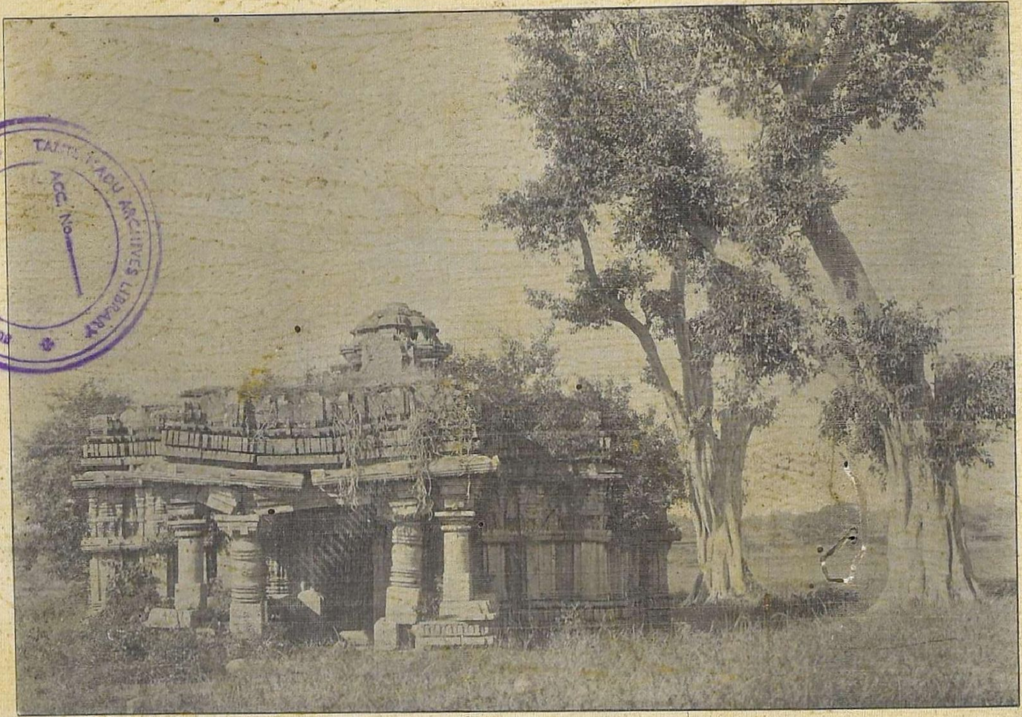
33 णैर्गिरां । आशीराशिमयैरेवं वर्णयंति गुणार्णवं ॥ श्रीसोमाह्वयदंडनायक भुजादंडप्रतापा-र्कभूः प्राची-

34 नाचलमंडलीकपरिषज्जृंभाखिलस्वस्तिभूः । वैरिश्रीहर गायिगोवल भुवि श्रीगंडपेंडार ते चंडीशः शुभवैभवं वित-



INSCRIBED SLAB IN THE ENTRANCE PORCH.

PLATE XXIIa.



1. RUINED NARASIMHA TEMPLE.

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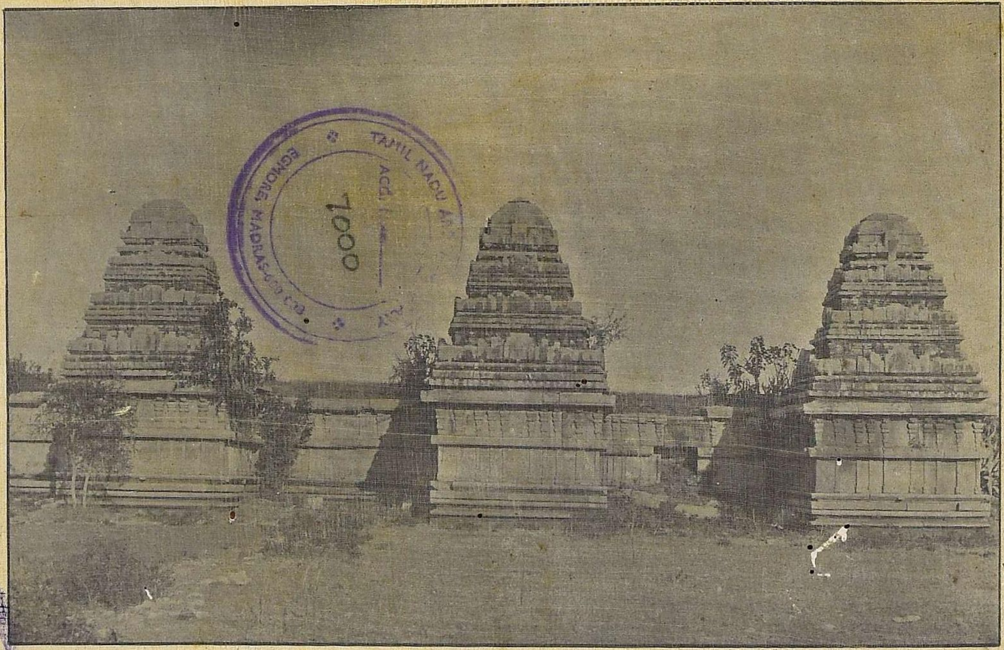

2. RUINED PANCHALINGA TEMPLE.

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